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August 14, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

1. What steps will we take this week to exploit politically propagandawise the Soviet-East German cut-off of the border?

2. This seems to me to show how hollow is the phrase "free city" and how despised is the East German government, which the Soviet Union seeks to make respectable.

3. The question we must decide is how far we should push this. It offers us a very good propaganda stick which if the situation were reversed would be well used in beating us. It seems to me this requires decisions at the highest level.

J. F. K.